

Application No.: 10/644,928
Art Unit: 3617

Attorney Docket No. 23253.00
Confirmation No. 7370

REMARKS

By the present amendment, Applicant has amended Claims 1, 8, 12, 14 and 15, and canceled Claim 11. Claims 1-10 and 12-20 remain pending in the present application. Claims 1, 12 and 14 are independent claims.

In the recent Office Action, the Examiner objected to the drawings as failing to comply with 37 CFR 1.84(p)(5). Claims 8 and 15 were objected to due a minor informality. Claims 8 and 15 were also rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite. Claims 1, 2, 5, 7-10 and 20 were rejected by the Examiner under 35 U.S.C. § 102(b) as being anticipated by Rhodes (U.S. Patent No. 4,358,866). Claims 3, 6, 18 and 19 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Rhodes, taken alone, or in view of Falcaro (U.S. Patent No. 5,465,676). The Examiner indicated that Claims 11, 12 and 13 would be allowable if rewritten in independent form including all of the limitations of the base claim and of any intervening claims.

With regard to the drawing objections, the Examiner states that Figs. 1, 4 and 6 include reference character "112" which is not mentioned in the description. Firstly, it should be noted that Fig. 1 does not show the reference character in question. Secondly, the specification at page 12, lines 4-5, clearly recites that "a watertight cap 112 covers the top end of each handle" as specifically seen in Figs. 2, 4 and 6. Applicant respectfully requests that the Examiner withdraw this particular ground of objection.

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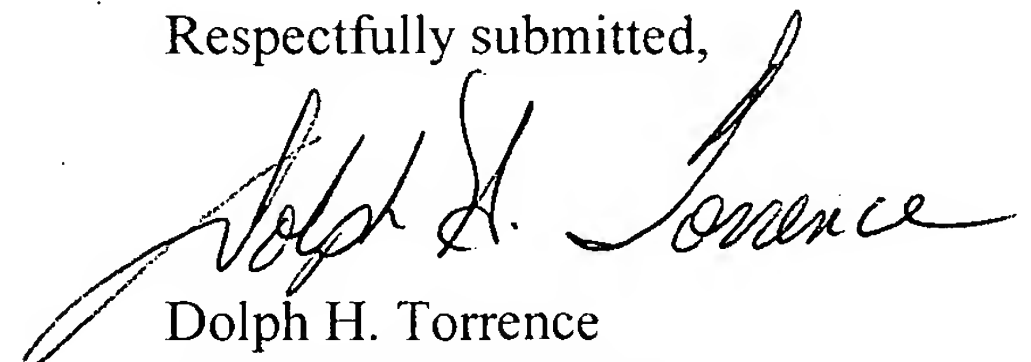
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Applicant has amended Claims 8 and 15 to correct the noted informality. Specifically, the semi-colon at the end of each instant claim has been changed to a period. Also, the terminology "the side members" as recited in Claims 8 and 15 has been changed to read –the side sections– in order to provide express antecedent basis for the claim language. Applicant respectfully submits that Claims 8 and 15, as amended, are in full compliance with the requirements of 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph.

The Examiner's indication of allowable subject matter is noted with appreciation. In this regard, Applicant has amended independent Claim 1 to include the allowable subject matter of Claim 11. Allowable Claim 12 has been rewritten in independent form. Also, the allowable subject matter of Claim 12 has been incorporated into independent Claim 14. For at least these reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that independent Claims 1, 12 and 14, as amended, and corresponding dependent Claims 2-10, 13 and 15-20 are allowable over the prior art of record.

For the foregoing reasons, Applicant respectfully submits that the present application is in condition for allowance. If such is not the case, the Examiner is requested to kindly contact the undersigned in an effort to satisfactorily conclude the prosecution of this application.

Respectfully submitted,



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